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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF AN ELECTRICITY CABLE TRENCH AT
BRACKENBOROUGH HALL,
BRACKENBOROUGH,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(BCH 98)**



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES

Lincoln County Council
Archaeology Section

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF AN ELECTRICITY CABLE TRENCH AT
BRACKENBOROUGH HALL,
BRACKENBOROUGH,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(BCH 98)**

Work Undertaken For
Yorkshire Electricity

March 1999

Report compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

National Grid Reference: TF ^{3310 9067}~~3309 9065~~
City and County Museum Accession No: 38.99

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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a new electricity cable trench at Brackenborough Hall, Brackenborough, Lincolnshire.

The area is dominated by the extant earthworks of the deserted village of Brackenborough. The earthworks comprise the tofts of the medieval (AD 1066-1500) village and moats associated with a manor house. The village remains are nationally important and are a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The investigations revealed a sequence of undated and recent deposits, including a rough stone surface, dumped deposits and topsoil. No finds were recovered during the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as 'a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons within a specified area, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1997).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Yorkshire Electricity to undertake an archaeological watching brief during trenching for a new electricity cable at Brackenborough Hall, Brackenborough, Lincolnshire. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a specification designed by Archaeological Project Services (Appendix 1).

2.3 Topography and Geology

Brackenborough is located 3km north of Louth in the administrative district of East Lindsey, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The route of the electricity cable is located to the east of Brackenborough Hall and runs for a length of c. 80m (Fig. 2). The cable route is situated at a height of c. 30m OD on a slight spur of higher land dropping down to the west, north and east. The cable route is centred on National Grid Reference TF

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Local soils are of the Holderness Association, typically coarse loamy soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 214). The soils overlie a drift geology of glacial sands and gravel overlying boulder clay. Beneath the drift deposits is a solid geology of Cretaceous chalk (BGS 1980).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Brackenborough lies in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the medieval period to the present.

Brackenborough is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Referred to as *Brachenberg*, the name is derived from the Old Scandinavian 'hill or clearing covered in bracken' (Ekwall 1974, 57). At the time of Domesday the land was owned by Alfred of Lincoln and contained 28 acres of meadow and a quarter share of a mill (Foster and Longley 1976).

Remains of the medieval period are dominated by the earthworks of the deserted village of Brackenborough. The village is represented by regular mounds representing the former tofts of the village. Partial excavation of the village in 1969 and fieldwalking in 1965 have revealed quantities of 12th - 16th century pottery and

also identified the position of cobbled yards and a possible mill mound (Bennett 1995, 180). The village remains are a Scheduled Ancient Monument, County no. 244 (English Heritage 1996, 4).

The village would appear to have become deserted in the early 16th century as tax records show at least several villagers occupying the site in 1498 whereas only a single family is recorded in 1549 (Bennett 1995, 33).

The only surviving building on the site is the listed 17th century Brackenborough Hall with 18th century stable blocks (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 177). This is set within a moat, possibly the remnant of the former medieval manor, believed to have stood on this site.

3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as described in the specification (Appendix 1), were to record and interpret archaeological deposits, if present, and to determine their date, sequence, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator up to a depth of 1m as required for the electricity cable. Following excavation, the sides of the trenches were cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were partially or fully excavated by hand to determine their nature and to retrieve artefactual material. The depth and thickness of each deposit were measured from the ground surface. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 2. A

photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording of deposits encountered during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Records of the deposits and features recognised during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

Two phases of activity were identified:

- Phase 1 Natural deposits
- Phase 2 Undated and Recent deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Phase 1 Natural deposits

The earliest deposit encountered at the base of the trench was a layer of reddish brown silt and clay (002) of which 0.75m thickness was visible. A brown clayey silt layer (005) was recorded at the base of Section 2, the variation of colour possibly formed as a result of its situation within a lower lying area.

Phase 2 Undated and Recent deposits

Overlying natural (005) was a layer of mid brown clayey silt (004) measuring 0.3m thick and identified as a buried topsoil (Fig. 3, Section 2). This was sealed by a mixed layer of clayey silt incorporating roof tile, chalk fragments and cobbles (003). Located next to standing buildings, this deposit may have derived from repair or construction work or to form a hardstanding surface in

the vicinity.

Section 3 (Fig. 3) was located within farm buildings at the western end of the cable trench. A single layer of brown silt with chalk fragments (006) overlay the natural deposits, and formed a surface within the shed.

A layer of topsoil (001), comprising brown clayey silt, formed the present ground surface at the eastern end of the cable trench.

6. DISCUSSION

Deposits of natural clay and silts (Phase 1), were the earliest deposits encountered during the watching brief. Identified as the underlying drift geology, these formed as a result of the last glaciation.

Phase 2 deposits are restricted to topsoil, a buried soil, a dumped deposit and a rough stone floor surface. No deposits of the medieval period were identified during the watching brief. It is probable that the cable trench was situated outside of the main habited areas, possibly within a backyard or small field.

No finds were recovered during this investigation although roofing tiles were noted adjacent to standing farm buildings.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations were carried out on land at Brackenborough because the site lies within the deserted medieval settlement and in close proximity to scheduled portions of the same. However, few archaeological remains were encountered and these were undated. No indication of waterlogged deposits were found during this investigation which

indicates that few environmental indicators (snails, seeds, pollen *etc.*) will survive other than through charring outside of the pond and infilled moats.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr S. Gray of Yorkshire Electricity who commissioned the fieldwork and post excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Denis Drury and this report was edited by Tom Lane MIFA. Dave Start permitted access to the library and parish files maintained by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Denise Drury
Supervisor: Fiona Walker
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

BGS British Geological Survey

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

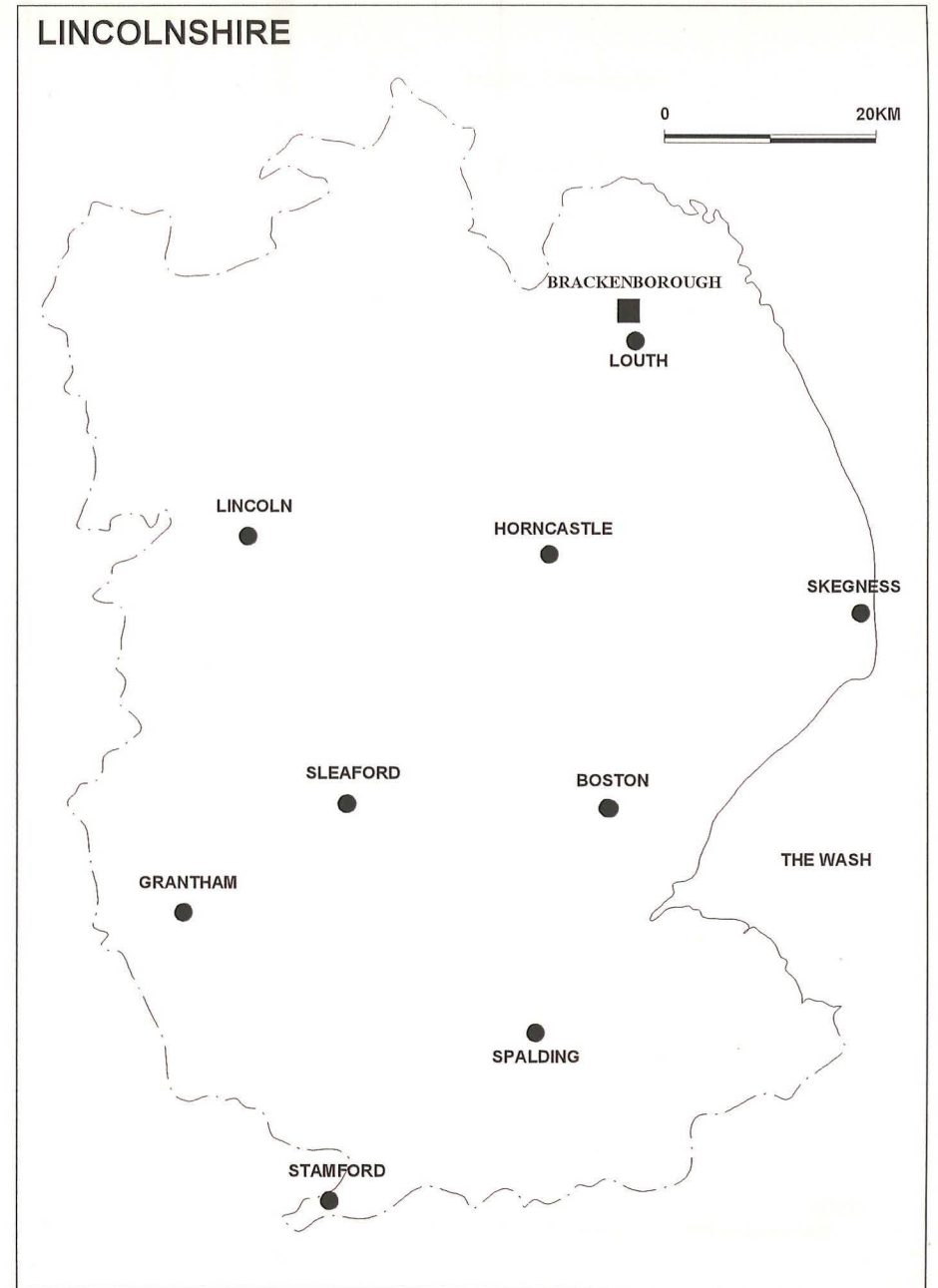


Figure 1 - General location map

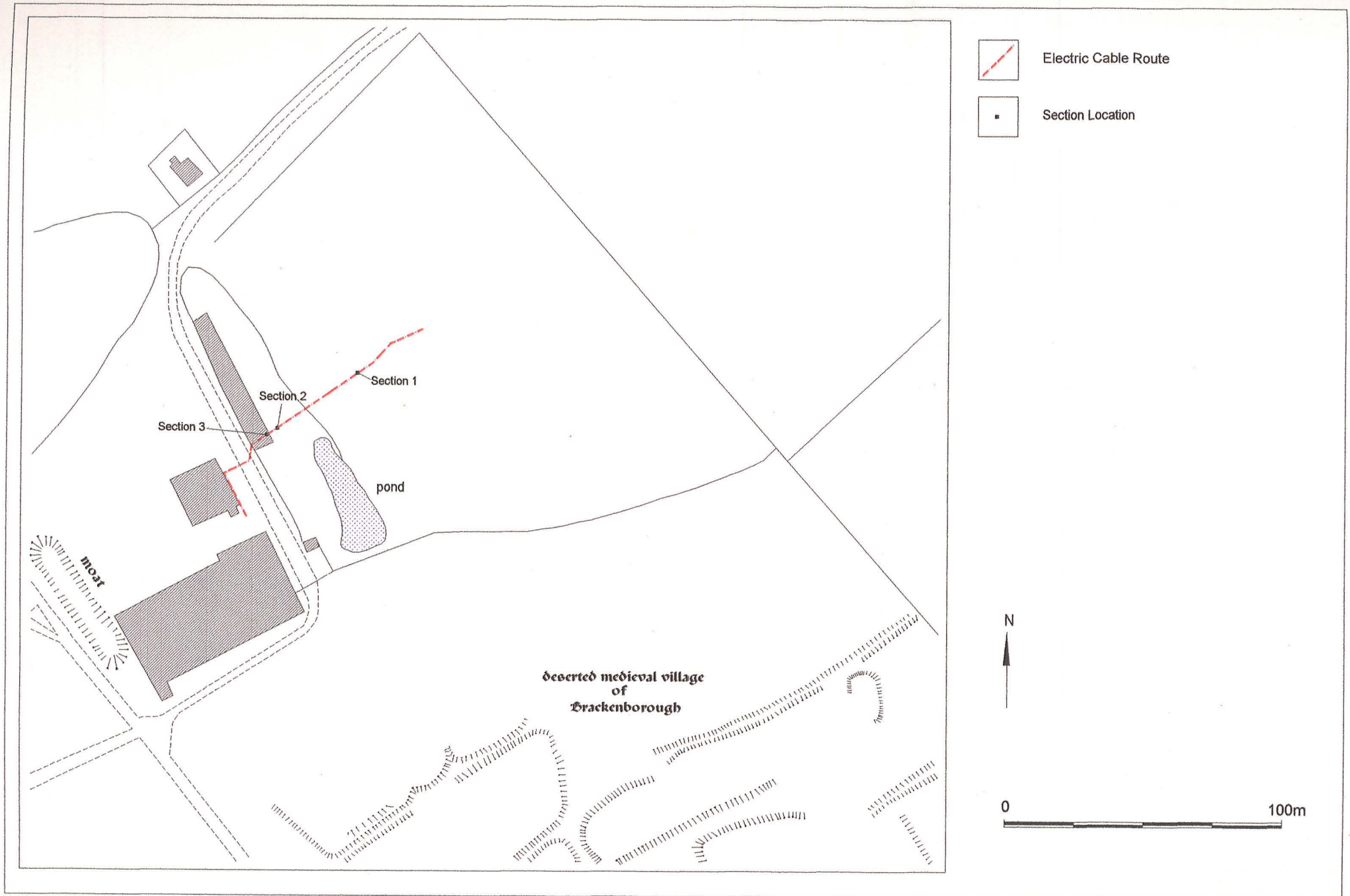
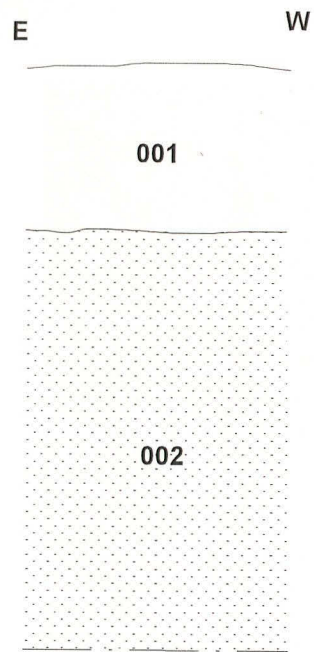
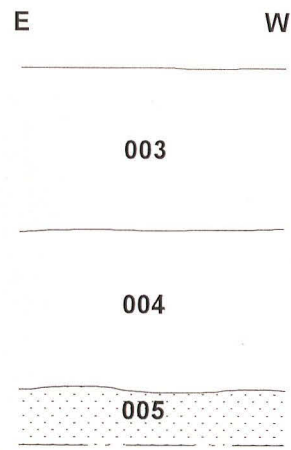


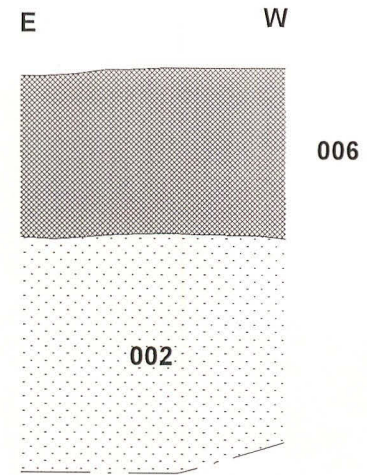
Figure 2 - Site Location Plan, showing location of drawn sections



Section 1



Section 2



Section 3


 Natural deposits
 Hardstanding



Figure 3 - Sections 1, 2 and 3



Plate 1 - The cable trench, looking west
towards Brackenborough Hall



Plate 2 - Section 2, looking north

Appendix 1

LAND AT BRACKENBOROUGH HALL, NEAR LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief is required during the installation of an underground electricity cable at Brackenborough Hall, near Louth, Lincolnshire.*
- 1.2 *The proposed works at Brackenborough Hall are located in an area of archaeological importance, lying between two scheduled areas of a deserted medieval village. Brackenborough Hall itself is believed to have replaced a building of earlier, probably medieval, origin and was surrounded by a moat.*
- 1.3 *The watching brief will be undertaken during groundworks associated with the installation of an underground cable. The archaeological features exposed will be recorded in writing, graphically and photographically.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork a report will be prepared detailing the findings of the work. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for an archaeological watching brief during the installation of an underground electricity cable on land at Brackenborough Hall, near Louth. The site is located at national grid reference TF 331 907, and is shown on Figure 1.
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
 - i. Overview.
 - ii. Stages of work and methodologies.
 - iii. List of specialists.
 - iv. Programme of works and staffing structure of the project.

3. SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Brackenborough Hall lies approximately 1km south of Little Grimsby and 3km north of the centre of Louth in the administrative district of East Lindsey. The proposed cable route is situated at Brackenborough Hall, on the northeastern side of the main group of buildings, at national grid reference TF 331 907.

4. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section has requested that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the groundworks associated with the installation of an underground electricity cable.

5. SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 Brackenborough Hall lies on a slight rise on the eastern side of the Lincolnshire Wolds at approximately 30m OD. Soils at the site are Holderness Association consisting mainly of slowly permeable fine loamy and moderately permeable coarse loamy soils developed on chalky till and glaciofluvial drift (Hodge et al 1984, 214).

6. THE ARCHAEOLOGY

- 6.1 Brackenborough Hall, which dates from the 17th century, is thought to have replaced an earlier, probably medieval, building and is surrounded by a moat. The remains of a deserted medieval village are located around the Hall. The medieval village is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (number 244).
- 6.1 The scheduled areas of the deserted medieval village lie to the north and south of the proposed cable route which is located on the eastern side of the moated Hall. The area is therefore of considerable archaeological importance and it is likely that archaeological remains will be disturbed during the groundworks.

7. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The aims of the watching brief will be:
- 7.1.1 To record the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the cable trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.
- 7.2 The objectives of the watching brief will be to:
- 7.2.1 Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
- 7.2.2 Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
- 7.2.3 As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
- 7.2.4 Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

8. SITE OPERATIONS

8.1 General considerations

- 8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.
- 8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), under the management of a Member of the Institute (MIFA). *Archaeological Project Services* is an IFA Registered Archaeological Organisation (no. 21).
- 8.1.3 Any and all artefacts found during the investigation and thought to be 'treasure', as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, will be removed from site to a secure store and promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

8.2 Methodology

- 8.2.1 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.
- 8.2.2 The section of the trench will be observed regularly to identify and record archaeological features that are exposed and to record changes in the geological conditions. The section drawings of the trenches will be recorded at a scale of 1:10. Should features be recorded in plan these will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. Written descriptions detailing the nature of the deposits, features and fills encountered will be compiled on Archaeological Project Services pro-forma record sheets.
- 8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.
- 8.2.4 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record consisting of colour prints will be compiled.

The photographic record will consist of:

- (1) The site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.
- (2) groups of features where their relationship is important

8.2.5 Should human remains be located the appropriate Home Office licence will be obtained before their removal. In addition, the Local Environmental Health Department and the police will be informed.

9. **POST-EXCAVATION**

9.1 Stage 1

9.1.1 On completion of site operations, the records and schedules produced during the watching brief will be checked and ordered to ensure that they form a uniform sequence forming a level II archive. A stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site will be prepared. All photographic material will be catalogued: the colour prints will be labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.

9.1.2 All finds recovered during the field work will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9.2 Stage 2

9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.

9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

9.3 Stage 3

9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.

9.3.2 This will consist of:

- (1) A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
- (2) A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.
- (3) Description of the topography of the site.
- (4) Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.
- (5) A text describing the findings of the watching brief.
- (6) A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.
- (7) Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
- (8) Sections of the archaeological features.
- (9) Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and

setting within the surrounding landscape.

(10) Specialist reports on the finds from the site.

(11) Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

10. **REPORT DEPOSITION**

10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the Client, the Archaeology Officer, Lincolnshire County Council, and to the County Sites and Monuments Record.

11. **ARCHIVE**

11.1 The documentation and records generated during the watching brief will be sorted and ordered into the format acceptable to the City and County Museum, Lincoln. This will be undertaken following the requirements of the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives* for long term storage and curation.

12. **PUBLICATION**

12.1 A report of the findings of the watching brief will be published in Heritage Lincolnshire's Annual Report and a note presented to the editor of the journal of the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology. If appropriate, notes on the findings will be submitted to the appropriate national journals: *Britannia* for discoveries of Roman date, and *Medieval Archaeology* and the journal of the *Medieval Settlement Research Group* for findings of medieval or later date.

13. **CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with the Archaeology Officer, Lincolnshire County Council. They will be given seven days notice in writing before the commencement of the project.

14. **VARIATIONS**

14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from Archaeology Officer, Lincolnshire County Council.

15. **PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS**

15.1 The watching brief will be integrated with the programme of construction and is dependent on the developers' work programme. It is therefore not possible to specify the person-hours for the archaeological site work.

15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.

15.3 A contingency has been included for the fieldwork in order to ensure that sufficient resources are available to adequately record any archaeological remains. The contingency allows for a second member of staff to assist with the on-site recording if required.

15.4 Post-excavation analysis and report production will be undertaken by the archaeological supervisor, or a post-excavation analyst as appropriate, with assistance from a finds supervisor, illustrator and external specialists. It is expected that each fieldwork day (equal to one man-day) will require a post-excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half man-days) for completion of the analysis and report. If the fieldwork lasts longer than about six days then there will be an economy of scale with the post-excavation analysis.

16. **SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT**

16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principal and if necessary, be used as subcontractors to

provide the relevant specialist work and reports in respect of any objects or material recovered during the investigation that require their expert knowledge and input. Engagement of any particular specialist subcontractor is also dependent on their availability and ability to meet programming requirements.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Body to be undertaking the work</u>
Conservation	Conservation Laboratory, City and County Museum, Lincoln
Pottery Analysis	Prehistoric Pottery - Trent & Peak Archaeological Trust Roman - B Precious, independent specialist Saxon - City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit Medieval and later - Hilary Healey, independent archaeologist
Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, independent specialist
Animal Bones	Environmental Archaeology Consultancy
Human Remains Analysis	R Gowland, independent specialist

17. **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Appendix 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm mid brown clayey silt, 0.3m thick	Topsoil
002	Firm light yellow-red brown silt and clay	Natural deposit
003	Firm mixed brown and reddish brown clayey silt, 0.3m thick	Dumped deposit
004	Firm mid brown clayey silt, 0.3m thick	Buried topsoil
005	Firm light yellowish brown clayey silt, 0.1m thick	Subsoil
006	Firm light brown silt with white chalk fragments, 0.3m thick	Floor surface within shed

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

6	Context records
3	Scale drawings
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Bag of finds
1	Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Lincolnshire City and County Museum
12 Friars Lane
Lincoln
LN2 1HQ

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Council Museum Accession Number: 38.99

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: BCH99

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* 1988 with all rights reserved; Excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.

Appendix 4

GLOSSARY

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Toft	An area of land or holding comprising a homestead and accompanying paddock.